

POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR NAMING ROADS/BRIDGES/FERRIES

Pursuant to NCGS 136.18(8), the NC Board of Transportation may name roads, bridges, or ferries. This is the policy and procedures approved by the Board of Transportation for carrying out said bridge, road, or ferry naming.

- I. Road and Bridge Naming Committee of the Board of Transportation.**
 - a. Committee makes recommendations to Full Board regarding approval of requested road/bridge/ferry namings.
 - b. Committee acts in response to local resolutions.
 - c. NCDOT Secretary and Board Chairman are Co-Chairs of the Committee and call meetings and approve the agenda
 - d. A quorum is necessary for approval of resolutions; a quorum is a simple majority of committee members.
- II. Criteria for honoree.** In order to have a road, bridge, or ferry named in honor of an individual, that individual:
 - a. Must be living, or be deceased for a year or longer
 - b. Must not be currently serving or pursuing a term as an elected official (local, state, or Federal)
 - c. Must be or have been a North Carolina resident. Residence verification is a person who filed NC taxes and/or is registered to vote as a NC resident. Proof of residency is to be provided by the requesting party at the time the formal resolution is submitted.
 - d. Must have made notable local, state, and/or national contributions and/or have significant accomplishments;
 - e. Must not already have another state-owned road, bridge, or ferry named for him/her. The Board does not name more than one facility for the same individual. Requests for duplicate family members reviewed on case by case basis.
 - f. May be a state law enforcement officer (e.g., Highway Patrol) killed in the line of duty.
 - g. Municipal officials, employees, and law enforcement officers (including those killed in the line of duty) should be recognized with a municipally owned bridge in lieu of a state owned bridge except in extraordinary circumstances, such as when a local law enforcement officer is killed directly in the line of duty on the state owned bridge to be named.
 - h. Must have strong local support with regards to the road, bridge, or ferry naming; resolutions passed by Municipal Councils and County Commissions must be unanimous. The Board does not mediate local disagreements.
 - i. Must have the support of the family with regards to the road, bridge, or ferry naming.
 - j. Additional Criteria for Individual Military Designations:
 - i. Recipient of Valor Medals as designated by Defense Department (listed below) are eligible for individual road or bridge designations.
 1. U.S. Army
 - a. Medal of Honor
 - b. Distinguished Service Cross

- c. Silver Star
- 2. U.S. Navy
 - a. Medal of Honor
 - b. Navy Cross
 - c. Silver Star
- 3. U.S. Marine Corps
 - a. Medal of Honor
 - b. Navy Cross
 - c. Silver Star
- 4. U.S. Air Force
 - a. Medal of Honor
 - b. Air Force Cross
 - c. Silver Star
- ii. Verification of the award would be provided by the requesting party at the time the formal resolution is submitted.
- iii. Medal of Honor recipients are eligible for interstate designations; other levels would be US or NC routes.

III. Criteria for named road/bridge/ferry. In order for a road or bridge to be named in honor of an individual, that road or bridge must be already constructed, or within 3 months of its expected construction completion date.

IV. Process

- a. It is the responsibility of the individual seeking the road or bridge naming request to work directly with the local government to obtain the necessary resolution for submittal to the Board.
- b. Local government should contact District Engineer or Division Engineer to let him/her know of the intent. The District Engineer/Division Engineer/Chief Engineer's Office can help guide local governments through the process.
- c. Local government drafts resolution. Resolution should specify what facility is to be named, and who is to be honored, but not what name should appear on the sign. This will be worked out between NCDOT and the local governing body apart from the resolution.
- d. Local government passes resolution in a public forum
- e. If the facility to be named is in more than one jurisdiction, resolutions from both jurisdictions are required.
- f. Resolution(s), along with all required supporting documentation (see subsequent section "Locally Provided Documentation/Materials") are forwarded to NCDOT.
- g. NCDOT staff reviews the resolution and accompanying documentation for completeness and consistency with the criteria. NCDOT will communicate with the local government about any deficiencies or issues with the submitted information.
- h. If staff approves the submitted request, it is placed on an upcoming Board of Transportation Road and Bridge Naming Committee agenda for consideration. Road and Bridge Naming Committee agendas are posted publicly on the web.

- i. The Board member representing the area making the request must endorse request and present to Committee.
- j. If Committee approves the requested naming:
 - i. A naming request reviewed and recommended by the Committee will be “held” for at least one month before being considered by the full Board
 - ii. NCDOT Board drafts a resolution for Full Board action. The Board resolution will specify what facility is to be named and who is to be honored, but not what name should appear on the sign. This will be worked out between NCDOT and the local governing body apart from the resolution.
 - iii. This item is placed on a Full Board agenda for the month after the committee approved it, if timing criteria are met (such as construction completion date or death date in the case of a deceased honoree), or is held until such time as the timing criteria are met. The Board member representing the area making the request must endorse request and present to Board
 - iv. NCDOT reviews the requested name for the sign and the requested designation limits. NCDOT communicates with the local government regarding any problems with the requested name (e.g., too long) or with the requested limits (e.g., overlaps with an already designated facility or exceeds allowable length) and suggests satisfactory modifications. (See Sections IV.a and IV.b below for length specifications for name and designated facility, respectively.) NCDOT and local governments will concur in writing with mutually agreed upon name to be put on the sign and the limits of the designation.
- k. If/when the Full Board approves the requested naming:
 - i. The local government and the Division are notified in writing of the approval and the required payment. Payment is due to the Department upon notification that the honorary designation has been approved by the Board. Signs will not be manufactured until payment is received.
 - ii. The NCDOT Communications Office plans a naming ceremony if one is desired by the local government.
 - iii. Signs are installed. Honorary signs will be ground mounted; overhead signs will not be installed. Signs will be installed at the beginning and ending termini of the approved roadway segment, and will not be installed on exits, Y-lines, or intersecting roadways.

V. **Locally Provided Documentation/Materials.** The following documentation and information is required before any naming request will be considered by the Board of Transportation.

- a. **Requested name to be placed on sign.** Signs may include up to one title, one first name, one initial, one last name, and one suffix, to be designated by the local governing body, as long as length limits are met. The Department will communicate to the local governing body applicable text length limits. (The entire name is limited to one line of text; the font size of the text depends on the design speed of the road where the sign is to be installed.)

- b. **Background information on nominee.** Sufficient information must be provided to explain why the naming is warranted; for example, local, state, and/or national contributions and accomplishments. If the designee is recently deceased, the request will be reviewed after a one year waiting period except for extenuating circumstances. Being a crash victim alone is not sufficient qualification.
- c. **Description of what is requested to be named.** The Board will consider naming Ferries, Interstate, US, and NC roads/bridges only (not buildings), more significant bridges on the state's secondary road system. The distance of road dedication should be 5 miles or less. Law enforcement officers will be honored with bridge dedications in lieu of highways.
- d. **Resolutions from all local governing bodies associated with or affected by the request.** City or town councils and/or county commissions must adopt resolutions in a public forum and in sufficient detail to adequately justify the request. The road or bridge must be entirely within the boundaries of the requesting governing body or bodies.
- e. **Character Certification Form.** Local government must attest, using a form provided by NCDOT, to the character of the honoree.
- f. **Strong public input and support.** Explain the degree to which the public supports the request and had notice of action with an opportunity for input. To help illustrate this support, the local governing bodies shall provide a minimum of three recommendation letters from civic, service, or business organizations.
- g. **Family support.** The requesting party should have the family's support for the road or bridge naming request including agreement with the requested location of the dedication.
- h. **A willingness of the local government to contribute \$1,000 toward the costs of the signs.** This represents approximately 50% of the sign cost, and is not due unless and until the Full Board approves the requested naming.
- i. **Minutes from the Municipal Council/County Commission meetings where the resolution was passed.** This is to substantiate that the resolution was passed in a public forum, and that the body was unanimous in its support.

- VI. **Alternatives.** In the event the requested naming does not meet the criteria, or is not approved by the Board for any reason, the local government has options to honor the individual, including, but not limited to:
- a. **Adopt a Highway.** Local governments could consider the "Adopt a Highway" program as an alternative method of honoring an individual or group.
 - b. **Municipal road or bridge.** Municipalities may name municipally owned streets or bridges in honor of individuals or groups. This does not require DOT review or approval.
 - c. **Blue Star Memorial Highway.** The Department has over 1,000 miles designated as the Blue Star Highway Network including all interstates, US routes, and most NC routes. This extensive network honors all veterans and military groups in the state.

VII. Blue Star Memorial Highway Network

- a. Requests for honorary designations for specific groups such as Bladen County Veterans or 100th Infantry, or a particular branch of the military are considered honored with the Blue Star Highway network.
- b. New interstate designations and segments are typically automatically added to the BSH as completed.
- c. See attached information on Blue Star Memorial Highways.

APPENDIX: BLUE STAR MEMORIAL HIGHWAY INFORMATION

The Blue Star Memorial Highways date back to 1949 as tributes to the men and women of the nation's armed forces. There have been numerous other requests to name additional highways in the state for specific veterans or military groups. However, because of the extensive network of Blue Star Memorial Highways that already commemorate our armed forces, the Department and Board Road Naming Committee has considered these requests duplications. The Blue Star covers all military personnel and conflicts and the committee has for many years been consistent with all groups with this response.

DOT receives requests from small groups specific to a certain area (such as Bladen County Veterans Memorial Highway) to large groups like the Purple Heart or Vietnam Veterans. The Committee has consistently felt it would be difficult to pick and choose which requests were approved; likewise, it would be extremely difficult to approve all requests because of the number we receive. We encourage local officials to dedicate a municipally owned street or bridge within their boundaries, which needs no action by the department. Some counties have memorials at their courthouses or office facilities recognizing local military personnel.

Since 1997, the department has had eleven requests for Veterans Memorial Highway designations (with slight modifications for the requesting party). These have not been approved due to the Blue Star Highway network.

Due to legislative action, the Blue Star signage on US 70 reads "Blue Star and POW Memorial Highway" and I-95 through NC has a "Purple Heart Highway" designation.

The Blue Star designation is considered an "overlay" designation for the lengthy segments of roadways. Certain segments of these roadways may be dedicated for individuals.

The Blue Star Highway designations in North Carolina:

- I-26 throughout the state
- I-40 throughout the state
- I-77 throughout the state
- I-85 throughout the state
- I-95 throughout the state
- US 70 throughout the state
- US 301 throughout the state
- US 64 from TNN state line to Williamston
- US 158 from Elizabeth City to Nags Head
- US 158 from Elizabeth City to Roanoke Rapids
- US 158 from Mocksville to Roanoke Rapids
- US 421 in Wilkes County
- US 17 from Williamston to Elizabeth City
- NC 24 from US 17 in Jacksonville to NC 172
- US 74 from NC 38 in Hamlet to US 220 in Rockingham

The Board has typically added each new interstate segment to the BSH network as it was completed.

The original Blue Star Historical Markers are associated with the Garden Club of NC. These are the shield shaped, grey markers more associated with historical sites and under the direction of the Department of Cultural Resources. DOT has a link on its website with mapping and information on these markers (<http://ncdot.gov/programs/environmental/bluestar/>).

In May 2005, the Board of Transportation approved the installation of new color signage across the state to improve and expand the recognition along the BSH designation (see attached map and sign sample). The increase in signs and new format has been well received across the state. The department has installed additional signs as requested by local officials.

We believe North Carolina has the largest Blue Star Highway system in the country with over 1,300 miles of highways across the state.

During times of active military conflicts, the department sees an increase in the honorary sign requests for individuals either killed in the line of duty, recipients of medals and for outstanding service, or for more specific local units and groups. Requests are not limited to recent conflicts, but also for WWI, WWII, Korean, Vietnam, and Desert Storm veterans. The department continues to support the BSH for recognition of the extensive number of military personnel, branches, military bases located in our state.

At this time, staff is working with the Office of Veterans Affairs to gather some statistical information on military personnel (active, deceased, or veterans) in our state to provide to the Board of Transportation's Road & Bridge Naming Committee and senior management.

For more information on bridge, road, and ferry naming, contact Missy Pair at mpair@ncdot.gov.